



General Assembly

February Session, 2016

***Raised Bill No. 426***

LCO No. 2741



Referred to Committee on JUDICIARY

Introduced by:  
(JUD)

***AN ACT CREATING A TASK FORCE TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO  
LEGAL COUNSEL IN CIVIL MATTERS.***

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

1       Section 1. (*Effective from passage*) (a) There is established a task force  
2       to study the nature, extent and consequences of unmet legal needs of  
3       state residents in civil matters. The task force shall examine, on a state-  
4       wide basis, the impact that the lack of access to counsel in civil matters  
5       is having on the ability of state residents to secure essential human  
6       needs. The task force shall report its findings and recommendations to  
7       the General Assembly. Such recommendations shall include  
8       mechanisms to: (1) Secure access to justice and legal representation in  
9       civil matters by increasing the availability of legal assistance with civil  
10      matters throughout the state; and (2) encourage increased pro bono  
11      service by the state's legal community.

12      (b) The task force shall consist of the following members:

13      (1) Two appointed by the speaker of the House of Representatives,  
14      one of whom shall be a director of a legal clinic program of a law

15 school located in the state, and one of whom shall be a mayor of a city  
16 with a population exceeding one hundred thousand;

17 (2) Two appointed by the president pro tempore of the Senate, one  
18 of whom shall be an attorney who either has a solo practice or who is  
19 in a law firm located in the state with twenty or fewer attorneys, and  
20 one of whom shall be an attorney in a law firm located in the state with  
21 one hundred or more attorneys;

22 (3) Two appointed by the majority leader of the House of  
23 Representatives, one of whom shall be a representative of the Open  
24 Communities Alliance, and one of whom shall represent an  
25 organization advocating on behalf of the disability community;

26 (4) Two appointed by the majority leader of the Senate, one of  
27 whom shall be a representative of the Connecticut Coalition Against  
28 Domestic Violence, and one of whom shall be a mayor of a city with a  
29 population not exceeding one hundred thousand;

30 (5) Two appointed by the minority leader of the House of  
31 Representatives, one of whom shall be a representative of a pro bono  
32 program organized by a law firm located in the state, and one of  
33 whom shall be a state resident who has been a pro se litigant in a civil  
34 matter in a state court;

35 (6) Two appointed by the minority leader of the Senate, one of  
36 whom shall be a representative of the Connecticut Bar Association, and  
37 one of whom shall be an in-house counsel attorney for a state business;

38 (7) The chairpersons and ranking members of the joint standing  
39 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
40 relating to the judiciary;

41 (8) Three appointed by the Chief Court Administrator, one of whom  
42 shall be a judge of the Superior Court who is assigned to the Family  
43 Division or had been assigned to the Family Division in the three-year

44 period prior to the effective date of this section, and one of whom shall  
45 be a judge of the Superior Court who is assigned to the housing  
46 session or had been assigned to the housing session in the three-year  
47 period prior to the effective date of this section;

48 (9) The Chief Justice of the state Supreme Court, or the Chief  
49 Justice's designee;

50 (10) The Chief Public Defender, or the Chief Public Defender's  
51 designee;

52 (11) The Chief State's Attorney, or the Chief State's Attorney's  
53 designee;

54 (12) The Attorney General, or the Attorney General's designee;

55 (13) The Commissioner of Social Services, or the commissioner's  
56 designee;

57 (14) The Commissioner of Housing, or the commissioner's designee;

58 (15) The president of the Connecticut Bar Association, or the  
59 president's designee;

60 (16) The president of the Connecticut Bar Foundation, or the  
61 president's designee;

62 (17) The dean of The University of Connecticut School of Law, or the  
63 dean's designee;

64 (18) The dean of the Quinnipiac University School of Law, or the  
65 dean's designee;

66 (19) The dean of the Yale University School of Law, or the dean's  
67 designee;

68 (20) The executive director of Connecticut Legal Services, or the  
69 executive director's designee;

70 (21) The executive director of Greater Hartford Legal Aid, or the  
71 executive director's designee; and

72 (22) The executive director of the New Haven Legal Assistance  
73 Association, or the executive director's designee.

74 (c) All appointments to the task force shall be made not later than  
75 thirty days after the effective date of this section. Any vacancy shall be  
76 filled by the appointing authority.

77 (d) The speaker of the House of Representatives and the president  
78 pro tempore of the Senate shall select the chairpersons of the task force  
79 from among the members of the task force. Such chairpersons shall  
80 schedule the first meeting of the task force, which shall be held not  
81 later than sixty days after the effective date of this section.

82 (e) The administrative staff of the joint standing committee of the  
83 General Assembly having cognizance of matters relating to the  
84 judiciary shall serve as administrative staff of the task force.

85 (f) Not later than December 15, 2016, the task force shall submit a  
86 report on its findings and recommendations to the joint standing  
87 committee of the General Assembly having cognizance of matters  
88 relating to the judiciary, in accordance with the provisions of section  
89 11-4a of the general statutes. The task force shall terminate on the date  
90 that it submits such report or December 15, 2016, whichever is later.

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| This act shall take effect as follows and shall amend the following sections: |              |             |
| Section 1   | from passage | New section |

|           |              |             |
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| Section 1 | from passage | New section |
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**Statement of Purpose:**

To create a task force that will examine and make recommendations on different mechanisms to increase legal representation in civil proceedings in the state of Connecticut.

*[Proposed deletions are enclosed in brackets. Proposed additions are indicated by underline, except that when the entire text of a bill or resolution or a section of a bill or resolution is new, it is not underlined.]*